



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals

“I invite all to come to the 2022 HLPF at the highest level and from all constituencies, with a lot of political will and accelerated actions to move the needle strongly towards sustainable recovery for all...” –

H.E. Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council
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COLLEN V. KELAPILE
President of the Economic and Social Council

We need answers to recover better through sustainable investments and policies that will bring transformational changes. Exchanging experiences, lessons learned, and forging partnerships are at the heart of the HLPF.

Photo: UN Photo



On 14 March the UN Building in New York reopened its doors to children of staff and diplomats, two years after it closed its doors due to the pandemic. It gives us joy and hope to see them again in the lobby and corridors. But it also reminds us of a very basic question: What does the world have in store for the future of these children?

Well, what I see will very much depend on what decisions and directions we take today in the year 2022. We are at a crossroads. 2022 can be the year that we hit a reset button.

There is still time to if we look around us to see how we can help others achieve prosperity and equality, while preserving Earth-system resilience, maybe we can find strength within ourselves to change our mindsets, strengthen multilateralism and global solidarity and increase international cooperation through transformative change.

Today, just over 62 per cent of the world population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. More than 10 billion doses have been administered globally, and nearly 32 million doses are now administered each day across the world. This is great progress for high-income countries where 70 per cent of people are now fully vaccinated, but not so much for low-income countries, where a mere six and a half per cent are fully vaccinated and only 11.4 percent have received one vaccine dose. Clearly, the vaccine gap is huge and global solidarity is still lacking. We need to support the World Health Organization's Strategy to Achieve Global COVID-19 Vaccination by mid-2022. Without this step, we won't be able to achieve sustainable recovery from COVID-19. But the vaccination is only the first step. We need to improve the socio-economic situation, which was hit hard by the pandemic and direct our policies and investments to sustainable recovery. Yes, most countries have pledged to achieve carbon neutral and nature positive economic development. Yes, many have promised universal health coverage and social protection measures to be put permanently in place. Yes, all have said that preserving nature and sustainably using our natural resources through nature-based solutions is the only way forward. But how much have we really done? How many people have we lifted out of



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poverty? How many have access to quality education, especially in view of huge disruptions in learning due to the pandemic? How many measures have we put in place to empower women, to diminish gender-based violence, increase the role of women in decision-making and decrease unpaid care work? Have we managed to decrease marine littering and increase the benefits of the blue economy? Have we undertaken measures to preserve biodiversity in our oceans and on land? Have we mobilized enough means of implementation and forged collaborative partnerships to achieve accelerated actions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals as our blueprint to recover better and greener? Are we supporting the countries and people that are furthest behind? These are the questions we need to provide answers for at the upcoming High-level political forum on sustainable development – the HLPF.

The 2022 HLPF in July this year will be crucial. We all need to sit down in our capitals with all government entities and all relevant stakeholders outside government and ask ourselves what each one of us can do and what collectively needs to be done. We need to come to the HLPF equipped with answers and open minds to listen to each other and learn from each other. We need answers to recover better through sustainable investments and policies that will bring transformational changes. Exchanging experiences, lessons learned, and forging partnerships are at the heart of the HLPF. Forty-five countries will present voluntary national reviews – VNRs this year. Almost half of them will come from Africa, where many developing countries are located, including least developed countries. Let us applaud their achievements, but let us also together assess their progress and act on their requests for support in the areas which they themselves identify as crucial for their development.

We are only a little over a year away from the second SDG Summit. This July, the HLPF should launch preparations for the Summit. We should decide on things we can achieve by September 2023 and the mid-point review. The Summit will assess where we are and how much our situation has changed since the last Summit in 2019. We all know that COVID-19 set back progress on achieving the SDGs but it is also an opportunity to recalibrate on how we move forward to a greener, more inclusive path.

I invite all to come to the 2022 HLPF at the highest level and from all constituencies, with a lot of political will and accelerated actions to move the needle strongly towards sustainable recovery for all.

Let us be inspired to accelerate the actions needed so that in 2030 we will end the decade in a much better place than we would have imagined at the beginning of 2020. We will see a world where benefits are shared more equally, where all have access to opportunities, where those who are vulnerable can be protected and where our natural resources and environment are thriving under our thoughtful and nature-positive stewardship.

